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PANDEMIC

Cities brace for financial woes

Communities fear loss of tax dollars, spending more for increases to state's pension fund



JEFF GRITCHEN _ STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A woman walks through the deserted Anaheim Convention Center on Tuesday. Anaheim could potentially lose millions of dollars because of closures.

By Teri Sforza
tsforza@scng.com
@terisforza on Twitter

As nightclubs and bars close their doors, as foot traffic at shops and malls evaporates, and as stock market investments plummet, California cities are bracing for a fiscal double-whammy that could slam the services they provide to Joe Citizen, and they're beseeching state legislators for help.

Sales and hotel bed taxes — the lifeblood for many cities — are expected to tank. And they'll have to fork over more to recover losses in pension funds, even as they're still scrambling to fill the pension hole left by the last recession.

One month ago, the value of the gargantuan California Public Employee Retirement System was \$400 billion. Now its value has plunged to \$352.9 billion. It's a terrifying déjà vu for local governments, which will be paying off the Great Recession's 2008 devastation for at least the next decade.

"When the bear comes, it doesn't tip-toe in. It's ugly and it's fast," said Sen. John Moorlach, R-Costa Mesa, who has been warning about the instability of California's public pension systems for nearly two decades. "It's going to be a mess. I don't know how it plays out. It's not going to be pretty."

In Anaheim, home of Disneyland and Disney California Adventure, the city reaped \$247 million in sales and hotel bed taxes

CITIES » PAGE 7

Disneyland: Closure of theme park over pandemic could cost the SoCal economy \$400 million

By Brady MacDonald
bmacdonald@scng.com

The unprecedented closure of Disneyland because of the coronavirus outbreak could have a \$400 million negative impact on the Southern California economy with reduced visitor traffic at hotels and restaurants near the Anaheim theme park and the slashing of city bed tax revenues.

An economic impact study commissioned by Disney offers a glimpse at just how big of a financial hit the COVID-19 closure of Disneyland could have on the park, the city and the region.

The study, by Cal State Fullerton's Woods Center for Economic Analysis and Forecasting, found that the Disneyland resort added \$8.5 billion to the Southern California economy and generated more than \$500 million in state and local taxes in 2018.

Breaking down the findings of the study by
DISNEYLAND » PAGE 7



EVAN VUCCI — THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Donald Trump meets with the coronavirus task force Wednesday at the White House in Washington, D.C.

U.S. outbreak: Trump as 'wartime president' taps powers to boost virus response

By Jonathan Lemire and Jill Colvin
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON » Confronting twin health and economic crises, President Donald Trump announced Wednesday he will invoke emergency powers to marshal critical medical supplies against a coronavirus pandemic threatening to overwhelm hospitals and other treatment centers. The Senate acted on the economic front, approving legislation to guarantee sick leave to workers stricken by the disease.

Trump described himself as a "wartime president" as virus cases surged and the markets fell, and he took a series of extraordinary steps to steady a battered nation, its day-to-day life fundamentally altered.

Most immediately, Trump said he would employ the Defense Production Act as needed, giving the government more power to steer production by private companies and try

TRUMP » PAGE 7

RESEARCH

Don't pooh-pooh it: Study shows coyotes' consumption

By Martin Wisckol
mwisckol@scng.com
@MartinWisckol on Twitter

Coyotes have been leaving behind a clue to keeping the hungry omnivores out of neighborhoods and away from your pets.

The thing is, that clue is hidden in their poop.

Researchers have held what they call "scat parties" for the last two years. After collecting coyote turds into brown paper lunch sacks along

some 50 routes in Los Angeles County, the scientists have gathered to see exactly what they have.

But first, they bake the poop to kill all parasites. Then, the stuff goes into a laboratory version of a washer and a dryer. Finally, researchers sit down and carefully pick apart what remains to analyze the content. In all, 3,100 samples were examined.

The producers of the poop fall into two categories: suburban coyotes and city coyotes. And the difference in their output is dramatic.

For starters, domestic cat remains were found in 20% of urban coyote scat, but just 4% of the scat produced by their suburban counterparts, who were mostly from the Thousand Oaks area and had broader access to wild habitat.

Overall, as much as 75% of urban coyote poo came from the human landscape: In addition to cats they eat garbage and fruit from ornamental trees — particularly ficus berries, but also grapes, palm tree fruit and

COYOTES » PAGE 11



STAFF FILE PHOTO

A coyote crosses a field near the former Marine Corps Air Station Tustin in 2019. A report this month by the National Park Service and Cal State Northridge found that urban coyotes' diets were far more based on human-related sources than their suburban counterparts.

INSIDE LOCAL

DANA POINT HARBOR

Getting the fresh catch to lobster lovers

Jon's Fish Market sold 60 lobsters Wednesday, the last day of the lobster fishing season, as it adapts to coronavirus restrictions with curbside service. **PAGE A3**



GOVERNMENT



OC officials clarify gathering mandate

County's public health order closing bars and restaurant dining rooms had caused initial confusion. **PAGE A3**

Public transportation keeping to schedule

Orange County Transportation Authority officials said they are maintaining normal operations for all buses and shuttles. **PAGE A4**

More closures for Knott's properties

Knott's Berry Farm closed its on-property hotel and the outdoor shopping mall next to the already-shut-there theme park. **PAGE A5**

NOTE TO OUR READERS

Readers today will find a new page of puzzles in our Sports section. The page is loaded with a new crossword, a sudoku game and nine other activities. Please check our index to find other parts of the newspaper you turn to every day.

INSIDE

A15: Sanders' campaign says he's reassessing, not dropping out.

A16: The nation's largest mall owner is shutting down all of its U.S. properties.

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